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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 CARACAS 000057

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HQSOUTHCOM ALSO FOR POLAD
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AMEMBASSY OTTAWA PASS TO AMCONSUL QUEBEC
AMEMBASSY BRASILIA PASS TO AMCONSUL RECIFE

E.O. 12958: DECL: 2030/01/19

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREF](#) [PHUM](#) [PREL](#) [KDEM](#) [SNAR](#) [VE](#)

SUBJECT: TFHA01: Venezuela Continues Attacks on U.S. Haiti Relief;
Embassy Strikes Back

REF: 10 CARACAS 51; 10 STATE 5277

CLASSIFIED BY: Robin D. Meyer, Political Counselor, DOS, POL; REASON:
1.4(B), (D)

¶1. (C) Summary: In a January 19 resolution, the Venezuelan National Assembly characterized U.S. assistance to Haiti as a "military occupation," which it rejected as a threat to both Haiti and Venezuela. The GBRV Ministry of Communication and Information Vive website altered its January 18 article linking the earthquake to U.S. military tests (ref A), but retained the main accusation, which has been reported in local media. Post will send a diplomatic note to protest these allegations. Local television and press favorably covered ChargC) d' Affaires John Caulfield's press conference January 19 rejecting Venezuelan charges that the United States was "militarily occupying" Haiti. Media also widely reported his suggestion that Venezuela and the U.S. could cooperate in providing fuel to Haiti. The largely positive international media coverage of U.S. relief efforts in Haiti has complicated the GBRV attempt to portray the United States as the evil empire. The GBRV's accusations have been reported with skepticism or criticism by independent media, if not ignored. End Summary.

National Assembly "Rejects U.S. Military Intervention in Haiti"

¶2. (SBU) The National Assembly approved a resolution denouncing U.S. activities in Haiti following the January 12 earthquake. The resolution accuses the United States of "taking advantage of the tragedy of the Haitian people" by "invading the island with thousands of marines and capturing the international airport." The resolution states the National Assembly's categorical rejection of the U.S. military intervention in Haiti and notes that "U.S. interventions in different countries throughout the world have always been aimed at extending its political and economic hegemony, to the detriment of the interests of the nations and peoples invaded." The resolution said the situation was "a threat to Venezuela." Opposition National Assembly Deputy Juan Jose Molina criticized the National Assembly for "playing politics with tragedy." The government newspaper Diaro Vea reported January 20 the National Assembly's resolution alongside an article on Nicaraguan President Daniel Ortega's accusation that the United States had taken advantage of the tragedy to install its troops in Haiti.

Allegations of U.S. "Earthquake Weapons" Persist

¶3. (C) The Ministry of Communication and Information's Vive website slightly softened the article accusing the U.S. of causing the earthquake in Haiti by testing an "earthquake weapon," removing the original language characterizing the earthquake as a "clear result" of U.S. military tests. However, the revised article remains on the website, and on the Ministry of Communication and Information "Radio Mundial" website, titled, "The U.S. Created the Earthquake in Haiti." Post will send a diplomatic letter protesting these allegations and requesting that they be immediately disavowed and removed from Venezuelan government websites. The mainstream Venezuelan press took a skeptical view reporting these accusations January 20.

Embassy Calls for Cooperation with Venezuela to Help Haiti;
Official Press Continues to Criticize U.S. Efforts

¶4. (SBU) ChargC) d' Affaires Caulfield emphasized to the press January 19 that the U. S. Armed Forces were providing logistical support to Haiti, and that the United States was ready to work with Venezuela to facilitate the supply of fuel to Haiti. Major media outlets covered his statements. Meanwhile, Venezuelan government

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websites continued to criticize U.S. activities. The government VTV website said the United States had threatened to send Haitians to Guantanamo if they tried to leave their country, that the U.S. offer to expedite the adoption of Haitian orphans could contribute to child trafficking and sexual abuse, that just 10 people had been treated at the floating super-hospital, and that Haitians considered the presence of U.S. troops at Haiti's parliament an affront to the country's sovereignty. Independent newspapers El Universal and El Nacional positively covered U.S. efforts to provide security. Independent TV and radio have provided largely positive coverage of the U.S. effort in Haiti drawing from U.S. TV networks and world service.

¶5. (C) Comment: The strong U.S. response to the humanitarian crisis and the favorable international media coverage of that response has challenged the effort by the GBRV and its friends to portray the United States as the evil empire. The GBRV response of misrepresenting the U.S. effort and inventing ludicrous charges such as the "earthquake weapon" has not gained traction with independent media. Official media meanwhile continue to blast out the GBRV propaganda line.

CAULFIELD